

UNIVERSIDADE DE CAXIAS DO SUL
ÁREA DE HUMANIDADES
CURSO DE LETRAS – INGLÊS

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EXTRA TOOLS IN ENGLISH LESSONS
Voice, body language and sense of humor

CAXIAS DO SUL
2018

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Projeto de Trabalho de Conclusão de Curso
apresentado como pré-requisito para a
obtenção do título de Licenciada em Letras –
Inglês à Universidade de Caxias do Sul.
Orientadora: Prof^ª M^a. Samira Dall Agnol.

CAXIAS DO SUL

2018

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To the other two musketeers, Marisul and Maria, who are always there, no matter what.

To my dear cousins Roberta and Ariane, who make me understand what is to have sisters.

To Laura and Débora, for the friendship and undeniable patience

ABSTRACT

This paper reflects on the difference teachers could make by motivating their classroom with some simple adaptation regarding their behavior towards the students. The objective is to analyze three specific attitudes that may be connected to teachers with the ability to motivate their students to get involved in classes and keen on learning. The three specific approaches studied in this paper are *vividness of voice*, *body language* and *sense of humor*. Brown (2008) postulates motivating students is essential, starting from teachers demonstrating enthusiasm themselves. Having this in mind, the manner with which teachers use their voice and body language while talking to the class may have a great impact on students' perspective because it is through this kind of attitude that humans demonstrate and perceive emotions. The sense of humor comes as an emotional strategy to provide a comfortable environment and make students feel more relaxed and also a way for teachers to bond with the class, so they are not seen in a mechanic way. The emotional aspects involved in the learning process are defended by Morrison, who states that "learning must go through our emotional filter and our memories are composed of experiences that are linked to emotions" (MORRISON, 2008, p. 45). As a result, this paper makes a reflexion on the Brazilian educational system and proposes some tips for new professionals to have a productive first year as educators, regarding the factors aforementioned.

KEY WORDS: Motivation; vividness of voice; body language; sense of humor; High School; English classes

RESUMO

Este artigo reflete sobre a diferença que os professores poderiam fazer ao motivar sua sala de aula com algumas adaptações simples considerando seu comportamento em relação aos alunos. O objetivo é analisar três comportamentos específicos que podem estar relacionados aos professores com a capacidade de motivar seus alunos a se envolverem nas aulas. As três abordagens específicas estudadas neste trabalho são *a vivacidade da voz*, *a linguagem corporal* e *o senso de humor*. Brown (2008) postula que motivar os alunos é essencial a partir de professores que demonstram entusiasmo. Tendo isso em mente, a maneira como os educadores usam a voz e a linguagem corporal ao falar com a turma pode ter um grande impacto na perspectiva dos alunos, porque é através desse tipo de atitude que os humanos demonstram e percebem emoções. O senso de humor surge como uma estratégia emocional para proporcionar um ambiente mais leve e fazer com que os alunos se sintam mais relaxados e também uma forma de os professores se relacionarem com a turma, para que não sejam vistos de forma mecânica. Os aspectos emocionais envolvidos no processo de aprendizagem são defendidos por Morrison, que afirma que “a aprendizagem deve passar pelo nosso filtro emocional e as nossas memórias são compostas de experiências que estão ligadas às emoções” (MORRISON, 2008, p. 45). Como resultado, este trabalho faz uma reflexão sobre o sistema educacional brasileiro e propõe algumas dicas para que os novos profissionais tenham um primeiro ano produtivo como educadores, considerando os fatores supracitados.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: motivação; vivacidade da voz; linguagem corporal; senso de humor; ensino médio; aula de inglês

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1. INTRODUCTION

Public High School in Brazil tends to support large classes of learners who unfortunately tend not to show much interest in English classes. There are several issues that could be pointed out as the explanation for this reality. The reasons usually involve not only the Brazilian school system but also some social contexts that affect a student's life and consequently influence their behavior in classes and their motivation to learn.

Somewhere in this scenario it is possible to see the English teachers that sometimes seem to struggle to make classes happen. They have difficulties to keep classes attention, to motivate them to accomplish activities and by the end of the year it is quite common to see learners that did not achieve the learning expectations. Lima (2011), states that in the majority of the times, this negative result is not a reflection on student's capacity to learn but in their lack of interest.

Facing this situation, teachers may feel as unmotivated as their learners, which can turn things even harder for both sides. The reason for this is that the lack of motivation may be something personal that can not be seen by others, but it can be transmitted to interlocutors through the way the speaker behaves, and according to Harmer (1998) this perception of such unenthusiastic behavior is definitely contagious.

Of course, such ideas cannot be generalized. Some teachers are not unmotivated, they just have their personal styles and it must be respected. But sometimes, observing their own behavior to see if there is anything that could be improved, so they can reach even better results, could be interesting for their professional improvement and also benefit learners. Considering this scenario, this paper has the intention to provide some reflections on a few specific behaviors, like body language, voice and sense of humor that may help teachers to use their behavior as a tool to motivate and bond with learners.

1.1 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Which High School English Teachers' attitudes are connected to students' motivation and interest?

1.2 OBJECTIVES AND SPECIFIC GOALS

The objective of this work is to define which characteristics are connected to a teacher who is able to instigate and maintain the interest of the students in English lessons in High School. This work is based on some specific points which lead to the possible answer by analyzing the posture of some teachers during classes, through the students' point of view, in the following subjects:

- a) Vividness of voice;
- b) Body Language;
- c) Sense of humor;

1.3 JUSTIFICATION

It is very common to see some teachers complaining about students who struggle to pay attention and show real interest during English Classes in regular Public High School in Brazil. Even those who just study, without any other responsibility, sometimes find the classes heavy and tedious and the content simply is not assimilated by the students, no matter how hard they try.

It is not rare to direct the responsibility for this situation to learners, who are labeled as lazy or irresponsible. A high school classroom is an environment composed of adolescents who have countless contents from other classes to assimilate. Thinking like this, the Foreign Language Teachers could make a great use of their attitudes in the classroom in regard to attention capture and improvement of the teaching-learning process.

Generally, motivation is directed to encourage them to apply more and make them understand that they are capable of learning. But it could be interesting to consider that indirect motivation, which is not explicit, may provide to the students the necessary mood, so they can really get involved in the class.

Teacher's attitudes may have a negative impact on classes. Such attitudes are so subtle or natural for the educator that they may go unnoticed. Standing in one place or having the arms crossed the entire time are some common examples of behavior that an educator should consider taking care of. Harmer states that:

all the position teachers take – sitting on the edge of tables, standing behind the lectern, standing on a raised dais etc. – Make strong statements about the kind of person the teacher is. It is important, therefore, to consider what kind

of effect such physical behavior has so that we can behave in a way which is appropriate to the students we have and the relationship we wish to create with them. If we want to manage a class effectively, such a relationship is crucial (HARMER, 1998, p. 16)

That is, taking into consideration Harmer's words, it can be presumed that teachers behavior towards the class is directly connected to how learners perceive them and the content they are proposing. In this sense, if the teacher is always standing in the same place, speaking automatically in a monotone and not sharing a bit of enthusiasm, such attitude tends to be reflected by the class.

The acquisition of language occurs mostly through the social interactions that humans experience throughout the first years of their lives. Vygotsky (1934) states that it is in the contact with the members of the culture of a particular social group that the baby, gradually transforms into a socio-historical subject whose interaction with the world will be indirect, mediated by symbolic systems characteristic of higher psychological processes.

Thus, when it comes to foreign language teaching-learning process, the socio-interactive aspects between teacher-student can also be of great relevance for the understanding of the language studied. As soon as the classroom becomes an environment of socialization between teacher and students they may make connections with the situation and put English classes into another perspective. This familiarity may come from the natural interaction teachers bring when they use voice, body language and sense of humor properly, making not just the content, but the vision of the role they are playing, as educators, into a more humanizing perspective.

This strategy may have a target on the emotional aspects of the intelligence and can fill the spaces that seem to never be complete when it comes to the teaching-learning process. In this sense, Brown (2007) resumes that emotions can influence a great deal on students progress in foreign language classes because it seems to be part of the cognitive process of human being. For instance, a relaxed space, in which students feel comfortable and safe can be built with teacher's attitudes over than just care about teaching methods, grades, and knowledge of the language. For this reason, the object studied in this paper could be an important piece of the puzzle that is teaching English as a Foreign Language in public Brazilian High School.

1.4 RELEVANCE

This paper may be relevant for English teachers and teachers-to-be, due to the fact that they have, as one of the main roles, the responsibility of providing conditions to build knowledge. It is fundamental for all educators to constantly reflect about their behavior and what can be improved to afford the best teaching-learning environment as possible.

After a while of practice, some professionals get inside their comfort zone and many times they miss the opportunity of updating themselves, sharing new methods, approaches, and techniques, resulting in lessons being taught in the same way or style and feel unmotivated to minister classes facing a reality where learners are not giving a positive response. A possible change, which is not hard to adopt regarding how they behave in front of the class, can result in a positive twist in the teacher's professional life. For future teachers, this analysis provides an opportunity to reflect on what kind of teacher they have the intention to become and give them a notion of self-evaluation so they can be prepared for their future classes.

This research is also important to bring such aspects of teachers attitudes to the surface of a tone of studies that do not approach the specific answers that this paper tries to investigate. These studies are not significant only for theoretical research, but also as an interesting material to apply to students at the universities who are pathing their way to the teaching career.

At the universities, future teachers face several disciplines that approach different kinds of methods and the ultimate techniques of teaching but it is not common to see a subject that causes reflection on how to act, how to use the voice to motivate the class. In Dornyei's words: "I am not aware of a single L2 teacher training programme worldwide in which the development of skills in motivating learners would be a key component of the curriculum" (DÖRNYEI, 2011, p. 27). In this sense, both the academic education and the qualification of these professionals could benefit greatly from the expansion of studies in this field of teacher attitudes in the classroom.

This discussion can also be useful for professionals who look for an improvement of their teaching abilities and may find the way by changing their attitudes in the classroom by giving a different look to their students and reflecting on how they can use emotional aspects to bring their learners closer to them.

The psychological and emotional aspects involved in the learning process regarding the attitudes of the teacher when it comes to voice, body, and humor still have

a poor discussion in the academic field. It seems to be based on techniques that aim to instruct future teachers to teach, but it does not seem to care a lot about the foundation of the teaching-learning process that is the human subject. Some authors, such as Brown (2007) and Harmer (1998) touch these issues in different lines. But, as it is going to be reflected through this work, Harmer's words embrace the line of thinking of both authors. He states: "when students are engaged, they learn better than when they are partly or wholly disengaged!"

Human beings live in society and this living is also based on the psychological matters that involve adaptation and interaction with each other. Information is transmitted and received in various ways in their own language, using signs, intonations, facial expressions and even humor, that is an icebreaker in several cases. Thinking this way, the minimum requirements that universities bring for their students to become good teachers of foreign languages could be improved, as soon as studies gain more body in terms of academic research, giving more resources to professors to improve their teaching training courses.

1.5 METHODOLOGY

When it comes to the methodology, this paper is based on bibliographic research to find approachable answers to the main question proposed, considering the amount of knowledge already built connected to the issues discussed.

The bibliographic evidence is crucial to put the possible answers and suggestions on a serious reflective spot, so the work presented can be credited as a valid subject to be reflected on, based on the support of the theoretical reference of authors and expert's opinions who have a thorough knowledge of their respective areas. Therefore of their opinions and statements presented as reinforcement to the possible answers to the questions exposed in this paper. Gil (2012) states that there is no academic study without bibliographical research and also explains that this type of research serves "to establish relationships between the information and data obtained with the proposed problem" (GIL, 2012, p. 77).

The three different attitudes approached in this work are grounded on the bibliographical reference of different authors and their respective works. For instance, Lima (2009) has an entire chapter in one of his books reflecting on what could be the supreme method of teaching English.

Also Brown (2007) is a north to this paper. His focus on language-teaching pedagogy and the detailed reflection the author brings to teachers' approaches in the classroom is essential. The author presents the very starting point of this discussion, suggesting to "remember that your own *nonverbal language* is important because children will indeed attend very sensitively to your facial features, gestures, and body language" (p. 77, author's italic).

Harmer also is a milestone for this discussion, who establishes that "the way a teacher moves, how he or she stands, how physically demonstrative he or she is – all these play their part in the effective management of a class" (1998, p. 23). The researcher understands that teachers have their own characteristics and habits and that is inevitable to bring some of these personal aspects into the classroom but "there are a number of issues to consider which are not just idiosyncratic and which have a direct bearing on the student's perception of us".

This research also has as reference from scholars who are experts in the communication field. Barbeiro postulates:

you can not be a leader without knowing how to speak in public. The leader, the CEO, the company president, the director, the manager, the speaker, the politician, the teacher, anyway, they would all have no chance of success if they could not speak well in public.¹ (BARBEIRO, 2011, p. 15. Our translation)

Nowadays the Internet is a tool that brings worldwide information and access to the most recent studies and bibliographical material. Such kind of research turns information more reachable and comparative. The online plunge is able to help the researcher to check the validity not only of the objects searched online but also of the bibliographical material in hand. This paper uses Internet research as a base to discover authors and investigate their credibility and how to have physical access to their work.

The storage and retrieval of research data on the Internet play an important role not only in keeping researchers abreast of developments across the world but also in providing access to data which can inform literature searches to establish construct and content validity in their own research. (COHEN; MANION; MORRISON, 2007, p. 261)

¹Você não pode ser um líder sem saber falar em público. O líder, o CEO, o presidente da empresa, o diretor, o gerente, o palestrante, o político, o professor, de qualquer maneira, todos eles não teriam chance de sucesso se não pudessem falar bem em público.

Internet, besides helping to search for bibliographies and their respective sources, is also a tool for other types of investigation, such as video research and interviews with experts on the subject treated in this work. Alves (2011)² is one of the sources used and his interview for the Revista Digital in which he talks about teaching and learning methods, as well as the relevance of the emotions in such a process. Those statements are used as a reference to this paper.

In terms of organization, the steps this text follows to reach the main objective can be the discussion of some concepts which give the basis for the analysis of the teachers' characteristics. Such as:

- vividness of voice, and its importance for the quality of the teacher-student communication;
- harmonic body language that matches the teacher's speech, the importance of gesture in the English lessons;
- sense of humor to build a healthy and safe environment for students.

Reinforce the relevance of these elements mainly to a language teacher due to the role a new idiom can play in each student's academic and professional life and suggest some possible orientations that could be relevant for the new teachers to have a good first year.

² Available on: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=2&v=qjyNv42g2XU. Accessed on: May 05, 2018.

2 TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD TEACHING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

This research aims to discuss the importance the educator's behavior may have regarding the learning process of the students in high school in Brazil. The intention is to reflect on how vividness of voice, body language and sense of humor can motivate learners by building a comfortable environment in the classroom.

It may sound like this discussion is looking to place on educators all the responsibility for student's learning but this is not the case. The teacher does not make the lesson happen by itself and the students desire for learning comes from many sources. Harmer (1998) declares that interest may come from pure curiosity, to watch American cinema productions or to get a better job. Teachers and students agree, making adaptations that best fit the profile of each class. But there is one thing that lays on teachers that should not be denied:

one of the main tasks for teachers is to provoke interest and involvement in the subject even when students are not initially interested in it. It is by their choice of topic, activity and linguistic content that they may be able to turn a class around. It is by their attitude to class participation, their conscientiousness, their humor and their seriousness that they may influence their students. It is by their own behavior and enthusiasm that they may inspire (HARMER, 1998, p. 8).

Having Harmer words in mind, it is proper to say that English teachers have no obligation to make learners feel interested or motivated during English classes. Such a result is not even possible, considering the personal characteristics of each individual. But it is their duty as professionals to provide an environment that offers this possibility. The author states: "teachers are not, however, ultimately responsible for their students' motivation. They can only encourage by word and deed. Real motivation comes from within each individual" (HARMER, 1998, p. 8).

Thinking like this, the present research intends to find the possible answer to what could be the way to use the voice in the classroom in a productive way having a good management of the oral skills with good voice projection, and change of intonation to give life to the different parts of the speech, so the teacher can have an advantage when it comes to captivating the class.

Body language goes along with the speech and this work tries to identify which aspects are important to give the teacher a more natural approach and, by consequence,

making a connection with the learners. Also, this paper seeks on how body gesture can help FL classes to understand the educator's speech in the second language.

The third and last aspect to be analyzed in this paper is the sense of humor and its connection to learners emotions. The intention is to make a reflection on how a positive humor can influence the classroom, providing a comfortable environment where students feel more confident and closer to the teacher. The present work considers all the aspects separately and then, in the second part, voice, body language and sense of humor are going to be analyzed as a whole so, based on the sources available, try to find what could be the best approaches new professionals could use in their first year of teaching English in Brazilian High Schools, so they can have a positive first experience in the field.

2.1 VIVIDNESS OF VOICE

The teachers' voice is still their main instrument of work. It is through orality that teachers communicate and interact with the class. Such an instrument is even more crucial to English classes, in which the constant subject is a foreign language unknown by the majority of the students.

It could be very productive if teachers were aware of some facts when it comes to giving an English lesson besides the aspect already mentioned that most of the class does not dominate the foreign language. First of all, it is important to take notice of how large a class is, and how this class is being approached through teacher's oral skills. Another point to reflect on is Brazilian classrooms that can uncomfortably accommodate more than thirty learners each. Do the teachers make themselves heard by the class? And if so, what is the impact of their voice in the room?

Basically, an interesting English lesson presupposes a listener teacher, students demonstrating interest and, above all, a class where the students participate actively. For that to happen, they need a welcome environment, with a teacher who is also participating in class. That is when a teacher uses a constant intonation of voice, does not demonstrate emotion, and/or have a voice that cannot be heard on the third row, gives the impression that the teacher is only physically present. Such attitudes could pass a negative message to the class. Students could feel that the teacher is not considering them as learners willing to learn and develop different skills.

A High School teacher should be always running against students weariness and personal issues which constantly steal their concentration. A good piece of that running can be won by a good voice management. A teacher who puts energy into words automatically energizes the class. Brown emphasizes all these ideas by saying that displaying enthusiasm and excitement in the classroom, teachers can contaminate students with that. Also, the opposite is true: being dull, bored and with low energy, so will be the whole group (2007, p.67).

A teacher should give oral emphasis to the important points of the speech, play with the intonation to capture the attention of the students, using different intensities. This can provide a better use of the lessons. Students may be more attuned to the content and keen on participating, asking questions, sharing opinion and, above all, enjoying the class they are in. When it comes to English classes, such oral behavior may be a relevant element to a successful teaching-learning experience. Brown also pointed out:

in your enthusiasm for teaching functional and sociolinguistic aspects of language, don't forget that the psychomotor skills (pronunciation) are an important component of both. Intonation alone conveys a great deal of pragmatic information (BROWN, 2007, p. 80).

Putting enthusiasm into words is an effective way to make it easier for the class to understand pronunciation, to distinguish phonemes, resulting in a class more able to understand teacher's speech and also providing them a resource to become good speakers. When learners know how a word is pronounced, they tend to act less careless and shy when the time to talk comes, because they have a good base to produce those words, turning it into a conversation.

Literature and the educational community give a great importance to the role of the teacher. The educator is no longer that person in front of the class who pours information to the learners so they memorize and reproduce. During an interview for Revista Digital (2011), Ruben Alves had a lot to share about this and said that the function of a teacher is to instigate the student to have taste and desire to learn, to embrace knowledge. In other words, they must teach students to think. Such idea goes directly to the motivational approach. Teachers could motivate their students by demonstrating motivation themselves. The reason for this is that during a speech the information passed to the audience goes beyond what is being said.

As well as helping to determine meaning, intonation gives us clues about the attitude of the speaker, or how he feels about what he is saying. When listening to people speaking, we get clear messages about their attitude from the ways things are said. We can get a good idea, for example, as to whether someone is interested, bored, being kind, being honest or lying, and so on. (KELLY, 2000, p. 86)

The speaker's voice while talking also passes information to listeners. It means that by speakers voice, the audience can detect how motivated and confident they are and that may be the factor that can make a difference when considering English teachers and learners in Brazilian High Schools. The path to motivating students lies in more than one approach and the way a teacher talks to the class may be one of them.

A teacher's speech is so important that can lead the learners to an intrinsic motivation which is the most genuine and productive encouragement a learner can develop. Intrinsic motivation is an internal fuel that is generated when individuals engage in activities that they find interesting, challenging and enjoyable.

Intrinsically motivated activities are ones for which there is no apparent reward except the activity itself. People seem to engage in the activities for their own sake and not because they lead to an extrinsic reward... Intrinsically motivated behaviors are aimed at bringing about certain internally rewarding consequences, namely, feelings of competence and self-determination (DECI, 1975, P.23)

Brown (2007) suggests that such stimulus is considered one of the most difficult to develop in students, Maybe the reason is that this motivation is not something that improves as a step-by-step project. It is provided indirectly through actions by the teacher. These actions are deeply linked to how the teacher deals with his or her posture toward the classroom.

Dörnyei created a list of strategies to create an intrinsic motivational environment and the first item on the list is: "demonstrate and talk about your own enthusiasm for the course material and how it affects you personally" (DÖRNYEI, 2001, p. 31). It could be presumed that talking about enthusiasm is not the same as demonstrating it. Enthusiasm may not be believable if the speech does not have a matching connotation.

According to Brown (2007), intrinsic motivation can be reached by appealing to learners self-determination and autonomy. It can be through "a communicative language teaching, in which language is taught to enable learners to accomplish certain specific

functions” (BROWN, 2007, p. 92). Teachers play the role of mediators or facilitators which means, that “playing a facilitating role gives the teacher a posture that generates intellectual excitement and intrinsic motivation for this process, as well as a commitment to the students' intellectual development” (ABRAHÃO, 2009, p. 222. Our translation)³. But it is important to highlight the influence that this position has on learners. Educators have a decisive role in the classroom. In this direction, students see their teachers as a north. They lay on them all their trust, expectations, frustrations, problems, and as hierarchical matter, they follow teachers commands. Thinking this way, although teachers are not leaders they have a sense of authority in the classroom.

One effective way to demonstrate conviction can be applying passion while speaking. In the interview mentioned before, Alves (2011) also mentioned that humans are not moved by ideas, but feelings. Considering this, a teacher who is also a good speaker can reach students on an emotional level, carrying them to a productive zone, where they do not need to make an effort to stay tuned on lessons.

Barbeiro (2011) presents that for reaching people, only talking is not enough. The use of emotional intelligence is necessary. Barbeiro is known as an expert in communication and persuasion, so his words seem to make a lot of sense when the meaning of emotional intelligence comes to the surface. Gardner (1993) named the emotional intelligence addressed in this work as personal intelligence and divided it into two aspects: intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence. According to the author, “intrapersonal knowledge allows one to detect and to symbolize complex and highly differentiated sets of feelings”. Which could be of great use for English teachers in large classes, for example, because teachers can help learners to understand themselves. It may seem like is not the teachers' duty to have this kind of approach but it could be of great use because it would help educators to understand the differences between each group of students so the lessons could be shaped properly, respecting students individuality. Basically, this sense of empathy can help English teachers in High School to understand what learners could possibly need.

Besides educators, it is important to reflect on intrapersonal intelligence on learners. This kind of ability to understand people feelings is the main reason why teachers behavior may be so important. Students, especially adolescents, are very sensitive to the way other people feel. And this ability to sense how other people are

³ Desempenhar um papel de facilitador confere ao professor uma postura geradora de excitação intelectual e motivação intrínseca para esse processo, bem como um compromisso em relação ao desenvolvimento intelectual dos alunos.

feeling is very influential for them. For Gardner (1993), when children become adolescents, their “personal forms of knowledge take a number of important turns”, and there is where it lays the importance of having a good management of reaching students through emotional intelligence. “They prove more sensitive to underlying motivations of other individuals, to their hidden desires and fears” (GARDNER, 1993). It means, still based on the author’s words, that these individuals no longer look for relationships only based on physical rewards, but for relations with people who can give them psychological support.

The second aspect of the personal intelligence is the main topic of this paper. Gardner (1993) explains that “the other personal intelligence turns outward, to other individuals. The core capacity here is the ability to notice and make distinctions among other individuals and, in particular, among their moods, temperaments, motivations, and intentions.” Teachers who develop this kind of ability are able to lead people. In other words, they have a great success leading learners. Then Gardner emphasizes:

interpersonal knowledge permits a skilled adult to read the intentions and desires—even when these have been hidden—of many other individuals and, potentially, to act upon this knowledge—for example, by influencing a group of disparate individuals to behave along desired lines. We see highly developed forms of interpersonal intelligence in political and religious leaders (a Mahatma Gandhi or a Lyndon Johnson), in skilled parents and teachers, and in individuals enrolled in the helping professions, be they therapists, counselors, or shamans. (GARDNER, 1993, p. 253)

Universities talk a lot about methodology and different techniques of teaching but they do not seem to embrace the emotional matter that interferes with the teaching-learning process. Teachers ought to be aware that a positively influential teacher is able to hold the attention, provoke reflection, and involve students little by little, so they have all the attention directed to what is being said.

Teachers and teachers-to-be should be enlightened of the importance of knowing how to use their voices, and also the attention they have to pay for it. Harmer (1998, p. 36) pointed out the importance of knowing how to use the voice in the classroom. According to the author, “how we speak and what our voice sounds like have a crucial impact on classes”. But there are a few aspects of how to use the voice that teachers must think about: “audibility”, “variety”, and “conservation”. Nobody likes a teacher who screams the entire time, so when it comes to audibility, is important not to confuse screaming with voice projection. In this sense, “teachers do not have to shout to be

audible. Good voice projection is more important than volume (though the two are, of course, connected). Speaking too softly or unpleasantly loudly are both irritating and unhelpful for students” (HARMER, 1998, p. 36).

According to Harmer (1998), a teacher must find a middle term between screaming and whispering, so the entire class can listen without getting bored or uncomfortable. The variety of voice enters as a mood changing or an emphasis on what is being said.

Harmer also highlights that a teacher who does not scream all the time has a good response when the voice raising is needed: “however, for teachers who never raise their voices, the occasional shouted interjection may have an extremely dramatic effect, and this can be beneficial” (1998, p. 36).

Since this paper has as one of its targets the reflexion on the voice of the English teacher, it seems relevant to elucidate that the educator should not be the only one speaking during lessons. Teacher Talking Time (TTT) is important because it is the professional who leads the class, but as literature defends, Student Talking Time (STT) could be even more important than TTT. Also, a class in which TTT is predominant – in relation to STT – could be, according to Harmer (1998) very boring for students and this boredom is “one of the greatest enemies of a successful teaching” (HARMER, 1998, p. 5).

Teacher’s speech, as already mentioned, has a great relevance in classes, but professionals must know how to use it. Harmer (1998) proposes that a positive TTT can be constructive if teachers know how to talk to students “then the students get a chance to hear language which is certainly above their own productive level, but which they can more or less understand” (HARMER, 1998, p. 4). It should be a balance between TTT and STT, but also a care for the no talking at all. It means that, according to the author, if teachers avoid speaking, the lesson gets less attractive.

So, vividness of voice seems a good position to reflect on how learners react to teachers with a bad management of their voices talking uninterruptedly during lessons (excess of TTT), by having as a source the following passage of Harmer’s book that offers an interesting point of view: “a class where teacher’s voice drones on and on day after day and where you hardly even hear the students say anything is not one that most teachers and students would approve of, however” (HARMER, 1998, p. 4) This scenario, is something negative and here is the point to reflect on because, if the excess of TTT is something negative, then added to a bad use of the voice, it can turn classes really hard for learners to get involved.

The ideal classroom, according to Harmer, is where teachers can find a balance between TTT and STT, but the author also defends that STT should be maximized. However, at some points, the teacher must talk to enter a discussion or give an explanation. In both cases, teachers need to speak and when the time to talk comes, it would be interesting to have a proper use of the voice.

2.2 BODY LANGUAGE

A well-applied orality, with the aforementioned aspects in use, it requires a corporal follow-up that is consistent with the vocal context of the teacher. In this way, it is interesting to reflect on the importance of corporal gesture in the teaching of the English language.

There are two important aspects of body expression that can be taken into account when it comes to the teaching-learning process. First, we can take into consideration the teacher's body language in a regular high school classroom. Just as the constant and monotonous voice does not seem to have a positive effect on the classroom, the gesture also influences the attention that every teacher seeks in his students. Polito (2006) says that the intensity of the gesture is inversely proportional to the intellectual level of the listener (In this case, the intellectual matter is all about the English learning process, since this paper tries to focus on the reality of public high schools in Brazil). That is, if the listeners do not have a great knowledge about the proposed subject, the gesticulation should be more intense. Also, the author presents that the emphasis gave to the gestures should also be more intense when the audience is larger. This case can be associated with the reality of a high school classroom where students have little knowledge of the English language. Body gesture, besides being an attitude that brings naturalness to speech, is also an advantage that students receive in order to better understand what the teacher is proposing. Polito (2006) has a chapter that brings some enlightenment:

there must be a synchronism between these three aspects, especially between the gesture and the tone of voice. When the speech is more convincing, the gesture must follow the tone of voice and be firmer. When, however, the

speech is softer, the gesture must also be more subtle. (POLITO, 2006, p. 100, our translation)⁴

Since everything in life is apparently based on balance, body language should also be measured and applied according to the necessity. At times the teacher will need to make more frantic gestures, in others, slower gestures. It all depends on the context, the emphasis on the speech, and of course the tone of voice used at the moment. Body and voice go together on the development of an effective behavior.

The second aspect, which is the main point here to be analyzed is the role of the gesture in an English language class in the middle school. The teacher's ability to move around the class and conduct their gestures can be very effective in the student's understanding of the content applied.

The students also needs to make a new cut in reality. It is somewhat "embarrassing" for the English learner to confront such expressions as "I am cold," "I am 15 years old," "I am tired." The learner perceives the arbitrary language sign, it becomes a tangible reality, the displacement of the real and the language is outlined there. (LIMA, 2009, p. 176, our translation)⁵

Although the use of the mother tongue as an aid in foreign language lessons is often useful, in many cases it can turn the understanding of the foreign language even more difficult for the student. They need to build a kind of identity and affinity with English and understand that it has structures that differ completely from their first language. There are many expressions that can be captured through the gestures of teachers, eliminating the need for the student to find another basis to understand what is being said, but the object studied.

A productive classroom environment is built over several details that may go unnoticed by the teacher because of its indirect existence. Paying attention to the nonverbal communication could be a way to reflect on how teachers behave in their English classes and how learners process that information.

Your voice isn't the only production mode available to you in the classroom. Nonverbal messages are very powerful. In language classes, especially, where

⁴ Deve existir um sincronismo entre esses três aspectos, especialmente entre o gesto e o tom de voz. Quando a fala é mais contundente, o gesto precisa acompanhar o tom de voz e ser mais firme. Quando, entretanto, a fala é mais suave, o gesto também deve ser mais sutil.

⁵ O aprendiz também precisa fazer um novo recorte da realidade. É um tanto "constrangedor" para o aluno de inglês confrontar-se com expressões como "eu sou frio", "eu sou 15 anos", "eu sou cansado" O aprendiz percebe o arbitrário do signo linguístico, este torna-se uma realidade tangível, esboça-se aí o deslocamento do real e da língua.

students may not have all the skills they need to decipher verbal language, their attention is drawn to nonverbal communication. (BROWN, 2007, p. 244)

The author makes clear the importance of body language in the classroom. He also emphasizes that in gesture package is included the teacher's movements. Brown (2007) suggests for the teachers to have a body posture that transmits confidence, maintain eye contact with the learners and never standing in one place the entire time. According to him, the professional must move around the class, but not so frequently, because such movements could cause some kind of distraction.

Being an English High School Teacher in Public Schools seems to be a complex mission. Every detail can make the difference for the best or worst. When it comes to teenagers in a reality such as the Brazilian Schools, the mission can be even more delicate. Sometimes, use body language could provoke understanding, leading the class to feel more confident or even making connections between gestures and words. Harmer suggests that “apart from adapting their language, teachers also use physical movements and gestures (these are often quite exaggerated), such as shrugging the shoulders for ‘who cares?’ or scratching the head to show puzzlement” (HARMER, 2007, p.37).

Maybe, all teachers need to do is to find a balance, so their classes do not turn into a mimic session. Although, a bit o mimic could be interesting according to the Harmer (2007) who exemplifies this with simple situations where mime could be used, such as movements that demonstrate the act of opening a book, filling a glass and also drinking it. When it comes to the already mentioned balance of the gestures, the author elucidates that “Gesture, expression, and mime should become a natural adjunct to the language we use, especially with students at lower levels” (HARMER, 2007, p. 37).

It is interesting to point out that when it comes to the use of gestures that facilitate the understanding on people/students with lower knowledge on the subject approached, Polito and Harmer use the same line of thinking.

Harmer (2007) used the expression “natural adjunct” in his previous quote. It means that the teacher should speak in a natural way with the students, using the gesture as they would use in an informal conversation as an involuntary auxiliar to their speech. This could put the students into that informal, light mood.

As elucidated before and soon will be more approached in this research, as mediators in the classroom, teachers are not speakers, but interlocutors, which means that they are not making a lecture, they are socializing their knowledge, instigating their learners, and experiencing the social interaction that exists in the classroom. Therefore,

it would be important for the teacher to really be an interlocutor, who exchanges knowledge and provokes reflection. The way teachers deliver their work could be a way closer to the success of this interaction. According to Polito, “the gesture is very important, and its lack or misuse can cause a poor transport of the message to the listeners since it is a vehicle that transports our thoughts” (POLITO, 1990, p.13, our translation).

One of the reasons of why this approach can be so important is that every human being who lives in society interacts with other people on a daily basis, having interlocutors who verbalize, gesture and express themselves in all kinds of manners. In this sense:

nobody can talk without movements or indifferent physiognomy, cold or empty. At least they should not, because gestures, eyes, and body movements are components of the non-verbal language of great value and impact on the interpretation and understanding of a message. (FROLDI, O'NEIL, 1998, p.42. Our translation)⁶

Using that naturalness to communicate with students may be the way for them to find something familiar, something with which they can identify in the midst of so much unknown information, considering the setting of learning a foreign language.

Making an evaluation on some of the sources brought until now, it is clear that more specific techniques of behavior and motivation are established by experts in the field of corporative communication, such as Barbeiro (2011), Polito (2006) and Frolidi (1998)⁷. As the author suggests, it is possible to assume that such literature is of great use to teachers. They are all convenient sources because their theories on communication and persuasion have been proving through time to actually work for those who need to speak to the public. As it can be observed until now, experts in the field of communication and teaching, indirectly communicate with each other on their point of views and theories. For this reason, such bibliography is used as a favorable support for this research.

It is important to point out a significant detail about these sources. Despite being an undeniable resource for teachers who are looking to improve themselves as orators, all the literature is directed to panelists, lecturers or people who have jobs and intentions

⁶ Ninguém consegue falar sem movimentos ou com uma fisionomia indiferente, fria, vazia. Pelo menos não deveria, pois gestos, olhar e movimentos corporais são componentes da linguagem não-verbal, de grande valor e impacto na interpretação e entendimento de uma mensagem.

⁷ In the cover of the book entitled “Comunicação Verbal: Um guia prático para você falar em público”, the following phrase: “Tested and approved by university students, teachers, business people, and professionals worried about oral expression (FROLDI, 1998. Our translation).

related to being a speaker who needs to deal with big, and most of the times, different audience. This is not exactly the case of most of the teachers, who, as already elucidated in this work, are mediators, or facilitators in the classroom. That is, they speak, and the way they talk has great relevance during classes, although they are not orators.

As previously discussed, Students Talking Time (STT) is preferable than Teacher Talking Time (TTT). Another diverse point is the audience. Public High School English teachers have frequent learners which differ from the professional who speaks in lectures or motivational meetings for large and different audiences. Once the audience is frequent, it is easier for them to notice some behaviors that may have a negative impact during classes. Also, when a teacher talks too much, it can become exhaustive for the same group of students to pay attention or to keep their motivation during classes.

2.3 SENSE OF HUMOR

A classroom should never be an environment based on fear and intimidation. The relationship between students and teacher can be crucial for the learning process, which means that as lighter and positive atmosphere the teacher and students create, as more comfortable the learners will feel on their own skin.

Relaxed students tend to be more productive, keen to participate and share their doubts and insecurities. The point here is for the teachers to create a connection with the students. Such connection can successfully experiment with a bit of humor while talking to the class. Making students laugh turns the class more comfortable, and students feel closer to the teacher, as well as it engages them in the learning process, two characteristics that, according to Lowman (2004), are the most important ingredients in the teaching recipe.

Bringing humor to the classroom is a kind of strategy that has its target directed to the student's emotional state. The way teachers see their classrooms is an important factor to measure their approach. The Emotional state can influence student's learning. Such influence can be positive or traumatically negative. There are some students, for example, that feel mentally blocked when it comes to certain contents or disciplines, and this mental block is usually linked to some traumatizing past or even present classroom experiences. Morisson explains:

learning must go through our emotional filter and our memories are composed of experiences that are linked to emotions. Thus, emotional memory is a critical component for the learning process. These emotions are either positively or negatively linked. As educators, what do we want our students to feel? What do we want to feel (MORRISON, 2008, p. 45)

According to Damasio (2000), emotions are part of humans reasoning and decision-making, being crucial to the memory and learning process. The primitive human instinct for survival is not limited to situations in which individuals feel a situation that could endanger their life. The brain understands as a threat the subjective elements that can cause fear, anguish, and discouragement. These feelings are a barrier that separates the teacher from the student and consequently makes the teaching-learning process a hard thing for both sides. Therefore, the teacher's sensitivity to this purely human side of the student can generate a deep connection between them, in which trust, freedom of expression and encouragement are deposited to face the difficulties of learning a foreign language.

A study made in China (2007) brings some statistics about learners preferences and opinions that involve not only the subject of this chapter but also increase the ideas expressed about the vividness of voice and body language:

teachers' affective characteristics refer to teachers' own mood and the expression on their faces when having class. 87.1% of the participants held the idea that teachers' happy mood and dramatic, rich, and kind expression on their faces could make them excited and even stimulate their interests in studying English. Unhappy mood and strict, stiff, indifferent facial expression were not welcome. Kate, the extrovert girl with 12 years' experience of learning English responded: A happy teacher makes me happy and relaxed. (SHANDONG, 2007)

Also, the same study shows that 100% of the students take notice of the teacher's personality. That comes a great deal from their sense of humor which is something that could be worked and improved constantly because such approach can be as important as the professional knowledge of the English language. Shandong (2007) also points that the majority of students think that the teacher's knowledge is crucial to their learning process because, when teachers have a great amount of knowledge, they can make a good usage of the material that is being studied. Considering this rates is observable that emotional aspects involved in English learning process have basically the same relevance as linguistic knowledge for students, which can turn the teacher's behavioral aspects a crucial matter in the foreign language classes.

3 HINTS FOR FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING

So far, it has been discussed about some specific behaviors that could be useful for teachers to motivate their students. With the support of scholars, voice, body, and sense of humor were placed on a reflective position as elements of great influence when it comes to motivate and establish a healthy environment in the classroom.

There are, as this paper mentioned previously, some variety of authors that point the motivation as a great deal in the classroom, but it seems like there is a reduced specific literature that is able to guide professionals and future professionals on how to motivate by the way they physically act in front of the class.

For this reason, this chapter is directed to all colleagues in their first year as English teachers in Public High School in Brazil. The intention is to propose some preliminary reflexions and brief suggestions for those who decide to embrace the hard but honored responsibility of being an English teacher in Brazilian High School.

3.1 THE SCHOOL WAITING FOR THE NEW TEACHER

Since the present work has the public High School as the element of research, it seems interesting to make a reflexion about the Brazilian educational system. Lima (2011) discusses the three elements that are pointed out with more incidence as responsible for the current negative reality. According to him, the first and most indicted is the government, that in theory has an inclusive speech, but in practice is excluding.

In the case of the foreign language, the inclusive discourse is that which excludes. In the face of the idea, already unsustainable in the globalized world, that foreign products are better than national products, we try to pass the opposite and equally sustainable image that only ours is of value, including our language and our culture. It includes, discursively, creating geographical, customs, and psychological barriers between countries, such as "Brazil is for Brazilians", "America for Americans", etc. (LIMA, 2011, p. 20. Our translation)⁸

⁸ No caso da língua estrangeira, o discurso includente é aquele que exclui. Diante da ideia, já insustentável no mundo globalizado, de que o produto estrangeiro é melhor do que o nacional, tenta-se passar a imagem oposta e igualmente sustentável de que só o que é nosso tem valor, incluindo nossa língua e nossa cultura. Inclui-se, discursivamente, criando barreiras geográficas, alfandegárias, e psicológicas entre países, tipo "Brasil é dos brasileiros", "a América para os americanos" etc.

The author goes further and supports that the government creates a linguistic barrier by acting in the sense that Brazilian, especially the poor ones, do not even have the knowledge of their own language, denying the opportunity to learn a new language, to learn what they already know, which is the national language. In this sense, still according to Lima (2011), the educational system restricts access to foreign language at schools, depriving them of the minimum conditions for learning, by reducing the number of foreign language classes or through the discontinuity of the curriculum.

Maybe that is the reason why so often students complain about being taught the verb to be. On the other hand, it is important not to generalize this reality. There are teachers out there, facing all the adversities of a public High School, that have the passion and energy to build great lessons with their learners. They are able to instigate, maintain interest and above all, provide an understanding of the content to the majority of the class. Those are teachers to be looked up to because they usually hold a lot of characteristics pointed in this research.

Lima (2011) also establishes the second and third responsible for this chaotic educational reality: teachers and students, respectively. But in order of organization of ideas, this chapter will talk about learners before the educators.

The students' lack of interest in class is a constant subject in educational debates. The author agrees that there are many explanations for the student who do not study or demonstrate interest during classes and the main reason is the lack of objective while they are in school. Without generalization, but unfortunately having a majority as a target, the author states that learners do not seem to understand that the school has as the most important function, the development of learning.

Some even see the school as an institution that grants knowledge, giving a diploma of completion, and study only to pass the year and get this diploma, but they can not go beyond. Others do not even achieve this: they are only at the level of the lowest interaction, in a world that begins and ends within the four walls of the classroom. (LIMA, 2011, p. 24. Our translation)⁹

Still pointing out the aspects of the student's responsibility, the author compares them to zombies, in the sense that they do not seem to see or to listen to anything, acting

⁹ Alguns até conseguem ver nela uma instituição que outorga o conhecimento, dando um diploma de conclusão, e estudam apenas para passar de ano e conseguir esse diploma, mas eles não conseguem ir além. Outros nem isso: ficam apenas no nível da interação mais rasteira, num mundo que começa e termina dentro das quatro paredes da sala de aula.

only as spectators of a show. A show which they are not watching by their will. They seem to be obligated, most of them for obedience to their parents.

In a few occasions, this paper brought the student's boredom as one of the reasons why teachers should embrace the motivational approaches offered: vividness of voice, body language and sense of humor. Lima (2011) places students boredom as one of the factors that make them to blame for the current educational scenario. He says that bored learners are incapable of discovering the pleasure of learning or to identify themselves with some author or book. Maybe, this boredom is not entirely student's fault, but being the guilty one or not, the result is the same:

it can be argued that the student is very young, has no experience of life and, often, not a suitable environment at home so that he can perceive the percipuous goal of the school. Unfortunately, this will not solve the problem of the student: guilty or not, it is he who will suffer, throughout his life, the consequences of many of his actions or omissions in his passage through school. (LIMA, 2011, p. 24. Our translation)¹⁰

Some people may find that this author has some very harsh words, but educators are, unfortunately, used to hear, read, see and live in much worst reality. So, having the two first guilties in the display is time to talk about the teacher's piece of fault.

Lima (2011) point out the unenthusiastic teachers as one of the factors. This lack of motivation, according to the author comes as a result of the government, social and learners behavior towards the innumerable attempts of this professionals to be a good FL teacher. In other words, in general, teachers enter schools with passion and will to develop great lesson plans that will finally change the sad, and maybe false circumstances, in which it seems to be impossible to learn English in regular schools. At the end of a short period of time, these professionals give up after facing several cases of neglect on the part of students and the educational system itself. In his work, he even shares some cases of teachers who, after getting discouraged, decided to work at language schools. And as is known, to work in English language schools, the pre-requirements are basic: know English (LIMA, 2011).

So the deficit goes on and English classes in public High Schools are given by teachers with a lack of knowledge in the idiom required but with a lot of free hours that

¹⁰ Pode -se argumentar que o aluno é muito jovem, não tem experiência de vida e, muitas vezes, nem um ambiente propício em casa, para que possa perceber o objetivo precípua da escola. Infelizmente, isso não vai resolver o problema do aluno: culpado ou não, é ele quem vai sofrer, ao longo da sua vida, as consequências de muitas de suas ações ou omissões em sua passagem pela escola.

need to be filled. Meanwhile, the teachers with the dominion of the foreign language are working at places where they feel recognition either by students who respond positively to their efforts and/or fair remuneration. In this discourse, Lima goes further: “what happens, then, when we have the same teacher in both environments?” (LIMA, 2011, p. 192. Our translation)¹¹. As it is the author style, the answer is direct. According to him, teachers, probably influenced by the circumstances tend to underestimate regular school student’s capacity to learn English as a foreign language, comparing them to those who pay for English courses. Lima seems indignant with this perspective and wonders if the English taught in schools is less important than the one taught in courses. This perspective generates the mute teacher, that is, that educator that never speaks a word in English during classes, which according to Lima, reaffirm the belief that teaching English in regular schools is never going to work.

Bearing all these information in mind it is possible to understand that educators may have their share of responsibility in the current scenario, but they, as the students, are also victims of those circumstances. Teachers have to balance their classes between the deficit of structure/incentive and student’s negligence and lack of faith in English classes. The situation is so critical that according to Lima (2011) many teachers give up on teaching in regular schools even before they start. Some future professionals live a little of the school's reality during the internship and decide to take another road. By the way, is important to highlight that internships are not the problem here. Internships hold a great deal of relevance for the teachers' formation.

3.2 THE TEACHER IN THE FIRST YEAR

It is understandable how some new teachers may find hard to keep their motivation in their first year after so many attempts to teach English in High School. Fresh teachers tend to dream of being the opposite of what they remember of their English teachers from High School. In his book, Lima (2011) shared some situations where some teachers chose this career so they could provide in schools what they felt it was missing during their time as students. Dörnyei (2011) sympathizes with those teachers, by saying that most of the educators enter schools with more in mind than to only prepare students for tests.

¹¹ O que acontece, então, quando temos o mesmo professor nos dois ambientes?

Motivation is an important key for teachers and students because it is through it teachers will keep going with their careers and also motivating learners, and it is through motivation that students can develop an interest in the English classes and actually learn from them. It may be a bit harder for new teachers to embrace this motivational idea because it is not a subject studied at the university during their teaching courses, but an update could be fundamental: “besides, motivational training might be a very good investment in the longer run, and it may also make your own life in the classroom so much more pleasant” (DÖRNYEI, 2001, p. 27).

But when it comes to motivation, it is important for new teachers to learn how to measure how long their responsibility must go so it does not cross the responsibility of the learners. Dörnyei (2001) states that the responsibility for encouraging students belong to the teachers who think in the long-term progress of their students. Is important to highlight that the motivational approach is not magic and is not going to touch every single student all the time. Managing the inspiration to reach students is not, according to Harmer (1998) and Dörnyei (2001) teachers’ responsibility. Their responsibility is to provide a motivational environment so the students that are open to receive it can take most advantage in English classes. Motivation seems to be a two-way road. Dörnyei understands that “the real reward for motivating teachers is not on pay-day, it is when their passion is caught by the students. That is a big-time return on anyone's investment” (DÖRNYEI, 2011, p. 27). In this sense, it can be presumed that investing time to motivate students can be a great strategy for new teachers so they do not lose their enthusiasm for teaching English in Public Brazilian High Schools.

Lima (2011) states that government, teacher, and students together shape a triangle of failure:

in the perspective of guilty and innocent, one corner of the triangle is occupied by an innocent and the other two vertices by the other two culprits. Of the three, the government has the best speech: it neither accuses nor complains, it only preaches inclusion. It can exclude in practice, but in theory includes. The teacher is the most cornered of the three, so when attacked, the most critical. They criticize the government because it does not give learning conditions and condemn the student because he does not understand what it is to study. (LIMA, 2011, p. 24. Our translation)¹²

¹² Na perspectiva de culpados e inocentes, um vértice do triângulo é ocupado por um inocente e os outros dois vértices pelos outros dois culpados. Dos três, quem tem o melhor discurso é o governo: não acusa e nem reclama, apenas prega a inclusão. Pode excluir na prática, mas no discurso inclui. O professor é o mais encurralado dos três, por isso quando atacado, o mais crítico. Desanica o governo porque ele não dá condições de aprendizagem e desanica o aluno porque ele não entende o que é estudar.

Bearing the opinion of all the authors quoted, when the educational reality is analyzed, it seems that the three aspects that build this scenario, do not work properly. Considering this, the idea is that if one part starts the change, the whole will feel it. And “when one of these elements – teacher/student/school – work, it can provoke and generate doubts that point to a change in other factors, and thus learning is possible.” (LIMA, 2011, p. 186. Our translation)¹³

3.3 TIPS REGARDING VOICE, BODY LANGUAGE AND SENSE OF HUMOUR

Being a new teacher can be challenging because of the lack of experience, among all the other processes to be learned with practice. They may find hard to control the class or to order their lessons according to the plan, which is normal and in most of the cases, transient. At the same time, these new professionals tend to have a fascination for their lessons, and this feeling can be of great use if the new educator knows how to demonstrate it. In the best scenario, this attitude could settle teachers style and how they are perceived by students. It could give them, the teachers, the fuel they need to do not let that flame for teaching get extinguished with the adversities that they will probably face over time.

Harmer (1998) made a questionnaire with students, regarding what characteristics a good teacher should have. One of the answers was that “a teacher must love her job. If she really enjoys her job that will make the lessons more interesting” (1998, p.1). Thus, how will learners know that their teacher is passionate about her work? And the answer is through teachers behavior towards the class. It does not mean that the teacher should use a persona. Being natural and faithful to their own personalities is basic, especially for new teachers. Harmer, says that “students tend to be interested in their teachers – at least at first. Ones who share their personality with their classes often have better results than those who do not” (1998, p. 1).

New teachers behavior will establish what kind of relationship they have with the class. The kind of behavior that Harmer (1998) illustrates is about having a closer relationship with students. This interaction is important because it may provide a type of contact with learners that goes beyond the purely technical interaction, which can be considered cold by many students. In this sense, this relation can reach a more personal

¹³Quando um desses elementos – professor/aluno/escola – funciona ela pode fazer

level, making the teacher more accessible and consequently making classes lighter and students more motivated. For Harmer (1998) this is the main point observed by students in the previously mentioned questionnaire. The interviewees cared more about the relationship between them and the teachers than with the educators themselves.

Regarding the importance of the educator's physical approach, this research will point, with the support of experts in the field of teaching and communication, some modest tips on how to behave in the classroom. Such guidelines are directed to new English teachers in Brazilian Public High Schools.

3.3.1 – USE THE VOICE AS A TOOL TO BE CLEARLY HEARD AND TO MOTIVATE.

To demonstrate enthusiasm teachers do not need to turn themselves into drama actors. Enthusiasm can be demonstrated even in quiet classes. It is all about the attitude of teachers that should pass the message of motivation and security not only on what they are teaching but also on learners capacity to learn when it comes to orally motivate a group of people. The way the voice is projected must be measured according to the message the teacher wants to give to the class. Brown (2007) explains that teachers must speak clearly and make sure that the entire class can hear their voices.

The voice is so commonly used that sometimes its importance and complexity goes unnoticed by English teachers. Public High school in Brazil tend to have a large number of students. It means that is not easy for students to hear clearly to what teachers are saying especially those who sit in the back of the class. Oral skill is important for any teacher that aims to succeed in classes. But mastering the use of voice is not something that teachers can dominate in one class. Vocal cords need to be trained and taken care. The voice does not need to be loud. It has to be efficiently projected so the entire class can hear.

According to Professor Froldi (1998), a good tip is to warm up the voice before the marathon of classes. It will be helpful not only for a better projection of the voice but also to keep vocal cords healthy. Also, an interesting point is to train the voice so it can sound as pleasant as possible, avoiding constant high pitches that can turn classes uncomfortable for students.

The way teachers talk is directly linked to the student's motivation. According to Brown (2007), teachers must demonstrate enthusiasm in the classroom, because if they give the impression of low energy and boredom with their own classes, learners will

have attitudes that reflect this kind of behavior. Having this in mind, new teachers should consider adapting the way they speak to their students and use their oral skills not only to communicate but also to motivate.

3.3.2 – CHANGE THE INTONATION

It may seem like being heard is something that is important only for matters of being understood by learners, but the truth is that there is a difference between having a good voice projection and having an enthusiastic pitch. So, as an important tip regarding the voice, Harmer (1998) and Brown (2007) agree that for the speech to create life and reach learners on an emotional level, the teacher must play with the intonation, speak clear and avoid the use of monotone while talking to the class. That is the first detail for new teachers to consider taking care of.

Another tip that seems to be valid is to practice the intonation. Froldi (1998) suggests making a simple exercise that consists of saying some word, sentence or expression in the same intonation then change the intonation and repeat all the exercise. The Professor uses as an example the expressions “que lixo” e “que luxo!” that means, respectively “what a garbage!” and “what a luxury!”. The trainers must say “what a garbage” in the same intonation as they would say “what a luxury!” and vice versa. The author says that is not an easy exercise at the beginning, but teachers will get practice and start to sense the difference that having control over intonation can make in their classes.

Froldi (1998) also suggests reading good texts. But the reading must be out loud, with interpretation, giving the words the correct inflection. New teachers will probably use their classes to put into practice they intonation, which is good because learners tend to be a very honest audience. In time, teachers can feel if it is working or not by the response they have from their students, so they can make changes and adaptations to their speech.

Finally, when it comes to the voice, it seems extremely relevant to talk about breathing. Froldi (1998), says that breathing is the energy of the speech and that if the breathing is not balanced, the sound of the voice does not perform properly. Also, approaching students through the use of the voice, is a practice that counts with emotional aspects that are essential to reach and motivate students. Professor Froldi says that breathing helps controlling emotions, therefore, it may be helpful to educators when

they have to put their positive attitude even when they are having a terrible day. Breathing, according to the expert, helps to release anxiety and allows tranquillity and disposal to speak normally. In this sense, the author shares some tips like never emit a sound with the lungs empty, avoid to speak while breathing, never breath in the middle of a word or sentence because it breaks the sense and rhythm of the speech. Also, the breathing must be deep, frequent, silence and abdominal and the thorax must be always straight.

3.3.3 – MATCH BODY LANGUAGE WITH THE TONE OF THE SPEECH

Body language can transmit information as much as the speech. Thinking further, according to Brown (2007), body language can transmit even more information than speaking because it complements the speech by giving additional details to what is being said. The author also points out that physical behavior in English classes is a crucial detail that every new teacher should consider to observe and improve as much as possible. The reason for body language has such an important part in teaching English is exactly because of its additional information function in a class where the studied language is not very familiar to learners. Polito (2006) and Brown (2007) agree that using gestural as a tool can be very helpful and facilitate not only the way students receive information, but also facilitates classes for teachers.

The first hint to consider is to understand that using body language as a tool is different from having it as the only instrument to teach. Teachers must remember that the main tool of a teacher in a classroom is the voice.

According to Polito (2006), the gesture comes together with the speech. Is an involuntary action of the body that follows what is being said. It means that it must come out naturally. But “if gestures are natural, why should I study them?”¹⁴ (POLITO, 2006, p. 94. Our translation). The expert’s answer is simple. The natural body gesture used during the speech while having an informal conversation tend to vanish when the speaker is talking to larger crowds in more formal environments, such as the classroom. In this cases, the gestures tend to be exaggerated, disappear or to be repetitive. In this sense, the tip here is to try to bring to the classroom the naturalness of the gestures that teachers use out of the classroom. It may be necessary that such behavior needs to be

¹⁴ Mas, se os gestos são naturais, qual o motivo que me levaria a estudá-los?

observed and corrected for a while because according to Polito (2006), the naturalness of the gesture is a natural adjunction since the childhood and “unfortunately, as all of us, you are not a child anymore and might have lost a lot of this spontaneous communication that was so noticeable in the childhood times.” (POLITO, 2006, p. 94. Our translation).

For new English teachers, it is important to have in mind that besides helping to provide a better understanding of the content, having a proper physical behavior is also an important addition when it comes to bond with the class. Teachers who spend the whole class sitting on their desks, standing in one place, with arms always crossed, according to Brown (2007), tend to pass a message that they are unhappy and that they do not want to be there. Also, it can pass insecurity, which can put in check their position in front of the learners. Polito makes a connection between orators that seem to be uncomfortable or unhappy to people who talk and make their gestures with the elbows practically attached to the body. So another tip is that “a good gesticulation is made with movements starting from the shoulders, building a small angle between the arms and the body.”¹⁵

Polito (2006) suggests making larger movements with the arms while talking to the class. The larger the audience is, the larger must be the gesture. Also, the author states that if the class does not have a further knowledge of the content, larger gestures are also an important addition to help their understanding. In this sense, teachers could use gestures to help learners to understand expressions like open a door, walking, sleeping and several other expressions that will come across the lessons. Another tip is to not make very fast gestures, because depending on the speech, it may be strange for students to follow so many sequences of movements.

Moreover, when talking about body language, it seems relevant to talk about eye contact. The eyes are an important piece of the body language and using it properly has a relevant impact on students. According to Polito (2006), the eyes are an exceptional indicator of the synchronization between the message and the emotions. “During a presentation, the eye fulfills two objectives: receiving feedback, analyzing how listeners react and behave in the face of the message, and value the presence of people in the environment. (POLITO, 2006, p. 101. Our translation)¹⁶

¹⁵ A boa gesticulação é realizada com o movimento partindo do ombro, construindo um pequeno ângulo entre o braço e o tronco.

¹⁶ Durante uma apresentação, os olhos cumprem dois objetivos: receber o retorno, analisando como os ouvintes reagem e se comportam diante da mensagem, e valorizar a presença das pessoas no ambiente

Considering what this chapter brought, communication is not only about speaking or moving. It is the harmonization between all aspects mentioned throughout this work. “Human language acts, interfere in the language of the face and body. For that reason, the total expression of an organism must be literally identic to the total impression that the organism provokes on us.” (POLITO, 2006, p. 101. Our translation)¹⁷

3.3.4 – USE THE SENSE OF HUMOR TO PROVIDE A LIGHT AND SAFE ENVIRONMENT TO THE CLASSROOM

It seems that all the approaches that this research brought to reflexion have as a target the emotional aspects that involve the teaching-learning process. The way learners perceive their educators through their oral and body behavior has a lot to do with the emotions that influence their interaction in the classroom. For that reason, the third and last aspect analyzed here is the sense of humor. Teachers with a positive sense of humor are from far the most successful professionals. The reason is its emotional impact on students.

The first suggestion this paper can offer is for new teachers to be careful with the kind of humor they intend to use during classes. It does not seem to be a good idea to get into the first class with a script of jokes or humorous references because funniness tends to please more ones than others. So, the first tip is for new teachers to get to know their students. Try to know what kind of sense of humor they have, which one is open for jokes and try to respect those who seem to feel uncomfortable with this kind of situation. Generally, teenagers in High School tend to enjoy teachers with a sense of humor, so if this approach is introduced in a Sutil way, probably no learner will have a problem with it.

It is easy to tell when the pleasant and supportive classroom atmosphere is there - you can sense it after only a few minutes' stay in the particular class. There is no tension in the air; students are at ease; there are no sharp - let alone hostile - comments made to ridicule each other. There are no put-downs or sarcasm. Instead, there is mutual trust and respect. No need for anyone to feel anxious or insecure. When one watches students enter such a classroom, 'one gets an overwhelming sense that the students shed emotional baggage at the doorway'. This is an 'emotional safe zone. (DÖRNYEI, 2001, p. 40)

¹⁷ A linguagem humana atua, interfere na linguagem da face e do corpo. Por isso, a expressão total de um organismo deve ser literalmente idêntica à impressão total que o organismo provoca em nós.

Sarcasm and irony may seem fun, but depending on the context, or the target, it may be offensive and can lead learners to an insecurity zone. Educators should avoid making fun of learners that make English mistakes. They are, by nature, according to Brown (2007), insecure with their performance while learning and reproducing the English Language. And it is not just on learning proficiency that a joke can have a negative impact in class. Anything that may put learners in an uncomfortable situation is not valid as humor.

It is important to emphasize that teachers do not hold any kind of obligation of being funny. But make an effort when it comes to turning the environment into a lighter mood is always beneficial. Talking about the news that is trending on the press or encourage students to share their own news can lead to a conversation that occasionally finds its way to its own funny moments. The reason for that is that teachers may not be, in their majority, humorous people, but every classroom seems to have those students who have the incredible ability to make everybody laugh. So, if new teachers do not have a fun sense of humor, they can always reach for a nice conversation with the learners. This idea is even more interesting in English classes, where the conversation can also help the interaction in the studied language.

Finally, technology can help a great deal. There are a large number of videos and images online that can become an inspirational source for teachers. And if the inspiration does not reach them, they can choose to take the material searched online to classes, and let learners have their fun. But is important that teachers try to harmonize their behavior with those materials, or with the message, they are transmitting. It could be at least confusing for students, if after showing a funny video or telling a hilarious joke, if teachers carry on with their lessons having a low attitude, giving the impression of being unmotivated.

4 CONCLUSION

To define which characteristics are connected to teachers who are able to motivate students is a complex mission, this paper brought three aspects that seem to be quite relevant to increase the learners' motivation. Unfortunately, these three aspects of teachers' behavior are not so considered in the research field. In the last decades a lot of studies came out, regarding educational motivation, but the vividness of voice, body language and sense of humor seem to always have a superficial participation in this research scenario.

Thinking about Brazilian public High School context, classes are, in general, over its capacity to accommodate learners. Students social and cultural aspects seem to be a barrier to the learning process of English, even though the technology supposed to be a tool to facilitate access to a large amount of productive material. The common reality embodies teenagers who have no improvements in their English skills even after all the years of foreign language classes in basic school. So, considering Lima (2009), it is proper to conclude that in the relationship between teachers and learners, when one makes a move, both sides feel it. In this case, the teacher's behavior in classes could provide a motivational environment to their students so, as a result, they can have a better experience while learning English.

The motivational aspect that involves teachers' behavior, as previously mentioned in this research, has a lot to do with the intrinsic motivation that the environment can provide to learners. Brown (2007), defines intrinsic motivation as the ones for which there is no apparent reward except the activity itself and the will to learn. The attitude from part of the teachers can be a trigger to this, because having a positive attitude towards the classroom, such as demonstrating and talking about their own enthusiasm and how it affects them personally can, according to the author, develop this level of motivation on students.

Still, on the parts of the intrinsic motivation, the behaviors approached in this paper have as one of its consequences the development of a personal relationship between educators and the individuals that compose the classroom, which Professor Brown consider one of the main aspects to be reached for teachers who aim to build successful lessons with their learners.

Considering the role of the new teacher in this new era of technology and new perspectives,

the dynamism it brings to society forces us to rethink our concepts and how we position ourselves in light of the ever-growing challenges we have to face. In this scenario, the school, and more specifically, the teacher is being redefined. (TRINDADE, 2018, p. 62)

New educators may already be aware that, according to Trindade (2018), knowledge is not an advantage of a selected amount of people anymore. Technology enables information to be carried in the learners pocket and all they have to do is to make a few touches on a small screen and they will have more information than hundreds of encyclopedias. This reality puts teachers in a new perspective. They are not the containers of knowledge anymore. Actually, they never were. But there was a completely different vision about the role of the teacher in the classroom a few decades ago that used to set teachers in that position. On the other hand, this new school seems to be a constant share of information. Everybody can learn during an English class. Including teachers.

New educators should focus on being the new mediators. Having the proper approach, gaining student's confidence and respect, motivating them to make their own discoveries. This new educational era does not mean, according to Trindade (2018), the end of the teacher. It means the end of the old approaches and ideologies because they belong to a world that does not exist anymore.

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